

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for the production of paper, board or cardboard, said process comprising:

shearing a paper stock,

adding a microparticle system comprising a cationic polymer and a finely divided inorganic component to the paper stock in a retention aid effective amount (1) after the last shearing stage before a head box,

draining the paper stock and forming a sheet, and

drying said sheet,

wherein said cationic polymer is selected from the group consisting of cationic polyacrylamide, a polymer comprising one or more vinylamine units, polydiallyldimethylammonium chloride and mixtures thereof, wherein said cationic polymer has an average molar mass  $M_w$  of at least 500 000 Dalton and a charge density of not more than 4.0 meq/g and

the microparticle system ~~is used as a retention aid and~~ is free of one or more polymers having a charge density of more than 4 meq/g.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cationic polymer is said cationic polyacrylamide having an average molar mass  $M_w$  of at least 5 million Dalton and a charge density of from 0.1 to 3.5 meq/g.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cationic polymer is said polymer comprising one or more vinylamine units obtained by hydrolysis of a polymer comprising one or more vinylformamide units, the degree of

hydrolysis of the vinylformamide units being from 20 to 100 mol% and the average molar mass of the polyvinylamines being at least 2 million Dalton.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cationic polymer of the microparticle system is added to the paper stock in an amount of from 0.005 to 0.5% by weight, based on dry paper stock.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cationic polymer of the microparticle system is added to the paper stock in an amount of from 0.01 to 0.2% by weight, based on dry paper stock.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said inorganic component is at least one material selected from the group consisting of bentonite, colloidal silica, silicate, calcium carbonate, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inorganic component of the microparticle system is added to the paper stock in an amount of from 0.01 to 1.0% by weight, based on dry paper stock.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inorganic component of the microparticle system is added to the paper stock in an amount of from 0.1 to 0.5% by weight, based on dry paper stock.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cationic polymer is metered into the paper stock and then the inorganic component of the microparticle system is metered into the paper stock.

Claim 10 (New): A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein said retention aid effective amount (1) provides a particular first pass retention (FP) and a particular first pass ash retention (FPA), and wherein said amount (1) provides the same or substantially the same FP and FPA when the microparticle system is added in an amount (2), except that the cationic polymer portion of the microparticle system in amount (2) is added before said last shearing stage, wherein amount (1) is less than amount (2).